

Message Text

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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

PM-03 L-02 IO-03 DPW-01 AID-10 EUR-06 NEA-06 PRS-01

RSR-01 RSC-01 SSO-00 /072 W
----- 131032

O R 201255Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6181

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

CINCPAC

CDRUSAAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

COMUSMACTHAI

USDAO/SAIGON/AOSOP-OR

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAIGON 15013

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJ: SITREP

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE
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EMBASSY AS OF 1800 HOURS AUG 20.

SUMMARY: THE OFF-SHORE CASUALTY RESOLUTION OPERATION IN MR 1 WILL CONTINUE UNTIL AUGUST 25, THE AUGUST 17 SESSION OF THE TPJMC SAW NO SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS. CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS IN MR-1 WERE UP SLIGHTLY OVER THE WEEKEND. AN UPSURG OF FIGHTING FRIDAY IN MR-2 RECEDED OVER THE WEEKEND. ARVN CONTINUED TO HOLD ITS NEWLY-WON POSITIONS IN TRUNG NGHIA. MR-3 REPORTS SLIGHTLY FEWER INCIDENTS AND NO MAJOR ENGAGEMENTS. IN MR-4, DINH TUONG PROVINCE REMAINED THE CENTER OF ACTIVITY IN MR-4, ALTHOUGH ONE SIGNIFICANT ENGAGEMENT WITH VERY FAVORABLE RESULTS WAS REPORTED FROM VINH BINH PROVINCE. MR-4 CG HAS ANNOUNCED A RICE CONTROL AND QUOTA SYSTEM FOR THE DELTA.

PART I FPJMT

THE OFF-SHORE CASUALTY RESOLUTION OPERATION IN THE HUE-DANANG AREA WILL COMPLETE ITS SIX-WEEK TRIAL PERIOD ON AUG. 21 WCD HAS BEEN EXTENDED UNTIL AUG. 25. SO FAR ONE AIRCRAFT OF INTEREST OF JCRC HAS BEEN LOCATED.

PART II TPJMC

THE CHIEF OF DELEGATION OF THE TPJMC REPORTED NO SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS IN THE AUGUST 17 SESSION. AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON ONE ITEM DURING THE MEETING; BOTH SIDES AGREED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 1700 IN ORDER TO ATTEND THE NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION OF THE INDONESIAN DELEGATION TO THE ICCS.

PART III MR-1

1. FOR THE THREE-DAY PERIOD AUGUST 17-19, THERE WERE 36 CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS, CONSISTING OF THREE GROUND ATTACKS, 21 ATTACKS BY FIRE (ABF) AND 12 HARASSMENTS. GVN CASUALTIES: 18 KIA, 10 MIA, AND 73 WIA. PRG/NVA CASUALTIES: 41 KIA AND ONE RETURNEE. 1,521 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY WERE FIRED NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS; 2,148 FIRED SOUTH.

2. THE QUANG NGAI PROVINCE CHIEF STATES THAT THE INVESTIGATION OF TRADING WITH THE ENEMY, ESPECIALLY IN BINH SON DISTRICT, IS BEING COORDINATED AMONG THE MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE, THE NATIONAL POLICE AND THE PROVINCE S-2. AS OF AUGUST 17
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ABOUT 100 PERSONS HAVE BEEN QUESTIONED AND PUNISHMENTS HAVE BEEN METED OUT TO MILITARY, POLICE AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, AMONG THOSE DETAINED AS A CLASS A OFFENDER IS THE FORMER DISTRICT CHIEF OF BINH SON DISTRICT, WHOM THE PROVINCE CHIEF SPECULATES MAY BE TRANSFERRED TO QUANG TRI. THE PROVINCE CHIEF ALSO MENTIONED THAT ONE PROVINCE COUNCIL MEMBER HAS BEEN INVITED TO DISCUSS WITH PROVINCE OFFICIALS ALLEGATIONS THAT HE SOLD RICE IN EXCHANGE

FOR CINNAMON THERE, AND THAT TWO OTHER PROVINCE COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL PROBABLY BE QUESTIONED SHORTLY.

PART IV MR 2:

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY IN MR 2 INCREASED SLIGHTLY OVER THE PAST 72 HOURS. THE SHARP UPSURGE IN FIGHTING ON AUG 17 RECEDED OVER THE WEEKEND. THERE WAS A TOTAL OF 69 INCIDENTS DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD, AND THEY WERE CONCENTRATED, AS USUAL, IN KONTUM AND BINH DINH. MOST WERE REPORTED AS ENEMY ABF, TO WHICH RVNAF RESPONDED. THE TAN QUAN (BINH DINH) DISTRICT CHIEF WAS ASSASSINATED AUG. 17. CASUALTY AGGREGATES DECREASED: VC/NVA: 48 KIA; RVNAF: 11KIA AND 59 WIA. THE NUMBER OF FIRSTSTRIKES, CONCENTRATED IN BINH DINH AND KONTUM, INCREASED: 26 ON AUG 17, 44 ON AUG 18, AND 16 ON AUG 19.

2. HOSTILITIES HAVE INCREASED STEADILY DURING THE MONTH OF AUGUST, RISING FROM AN AVERAGE OF AROUND TEN INCIDENTS A DAY IN THE FIRST WEEK TO AROUND TWENTY DURING THE THIRD WEEK. CASUALTIES HAVE RISEN COMMENSURATELY. THE INCREASED ACTIVITY HAS BEEN CONCENTRATED IN THE TRADITIONALLY BELLICOSE AREAS OF NORTHEASTERN BINH DINH AND WEST AND SOUTHWEST OF KONTUM CITY. THERE HAVE BEEN A FEW LARGE ENGAGEMENTS, BUT IN GENERAL THE INCREASE HAS CONSISTED OF SMALLER INCIDENTS PRECIPITATED BY RVNAF EXPANSION IN BINH DINH AND BY MANEUVERS ATTENDING THE BATTLE FOR TRUNG NGHIA IN KONTUM.

3. IN GENERAL CONVERSATION THIS MORNING AT CORNESTONE-LAYING CEREMONY FOR THE NEW COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE BUILDING IN NHA TRANG, MAR. GEN TOAN TOLD CONGEN THAT ARVN TROOPS WERE "ONE-THIRD" OF THE WAY INTO TRUNG NGHIA, WERE DUG-IN, AND WOULD HANG ON IN FACE OF THE STRONGLY-ENTRENCHED ENEMY. HE ALSO SAID HE HAD INFORMATION - NOT YET CONFIRMED - THAT THE 141ST

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REGT. OF THE NVA 2ND DIVISION IS COMING TO BINH DINH FROM QUANG NGAI TO REPLACE THE 2ND REGT. OF THE 3RD DIVISION, WHICH WILL MOVE NORTH.

PART V MR 3:

1. MR 3 G2 REPORTS 45 MILITARY CLASHES DURING THE 72 HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0800 AUG 20. SIXTEEN OF THESE WERE IN THE FIRST 24 HOUR PERIOD, 14 IN THE SECOND, AND 15 THE LAST 24 HOURS, THERE WERE 11 GROUND CONTACTS, 11 ABFS, TWO COORDINATED GROUND ATTACKS ABF, 12 MINING/GRENDADE DETONATIONS, TWO LUMBER TRUCK HIJACKING (NEAR PHU GIAO, BINH DUONG PROVINCE, SIX SMALL ARMS HARASSMENTS, AND ONE SAPPER ATTEMPT (IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE). REPORTED GVN LOSSES WERE 12 KILLED (TWO CIVILIAN), 20 WOUNDED (SEVEN CIVILIAN) AND ONE MIA. COMMUNIST LOSSES FOR THE SAME PERIOD WERE 13

KIA AND THREE KIA/WIA. TWO VC/NVA RALLIED TO THE GVN IN HAU
NGHIA.

2. IN REGUALR MONDAY MORNING MR 3 WEEKLY BRIEFING, G-2 REPORTED
HE HAS INFORMATION THAT COMMUNISTS WILL TRY TO SABOTAGE UPPER

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PM-03 L-02 IO-03 DPW-01 AID-10 EUR-10 NEA-06 RSR-01

RSC-01 PRS-01 SSO-00 /076 W
----- 130960

O R 201255Z AUG 73
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6182
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
CINCPAC
CDRUSAAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE
COMUSMACHTAI
USDAO/SAIGON/AOSOP-OR
USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAIGON 15013

LIMDIS

HOUSE ELECTION THROUGH SHELLING AND INTERDICTING OF SELECTED
HIGHWAYS TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM VOTING, AND USING OTHER
SPECIAL METHODS INCLUDING PICKING UP REGISTRATION CARDS.

3. BEN LUC DISTRICT, ONG AN PROVINCE, HAS BEEN QUIET OVER WEEKEND AFTER HEAVY FIGHTING AUG 16-17. ON AUG 17, MR 3 G-2 LTC BINH TOLD DAO/RLO THAT BEN LUC CLASHES INVOLVED COMMUNIST LOCAL FORCE K.5 BATTALION. ACCORDING TO POWS, K.5 WAS MOVING TOWARD PARROT'S BEAK AREA OF CAMBODIA FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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REFITTING AND RETRAINING, BUT BINH DOUBTED THIS AND SPECULATED RATHER THAT K.5 WOULD JOIN WITH K.7 IN HARRASSMENT OF DUC HOA DISTRICT SEAT, HAU NGHIA PROVINCE, IN CONNECTION WITH AUGUST 26 UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS. HE SAID DOCUMENTS CAPTURED DURING BEN LUC ENGAGEMENT CONTAINED ORDERS FOR LONG AN LOCAL FORCE BATTALIONS TO INITIATE SMALL UNIT ATTACKS AT KEY POINTS, SUCH AS CITIES, TOWNS, AND LOCS, FROM JULY 20 TO AUGUST 15. CONGEN COMMENT: IT IS NOT UNUSUAL FOR COMMUNIST UNITS TO FALL BEHIND SCHEDULE ESTABLISHED IN ORDERS FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS. END COMMENT.)

4. THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT SITUATION HAS IMPROVED ALONG INTER-PROVINCIAL ROUTE 23 BETWEEN DAT DO AND XUYEN MOC DISTRICT TOWNS IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE. DAO/RLO OVERFLEW ROAD AUG 16 AND SAW LITTLE OR NO TRAFFIC ALONG IT, BUT ALSO NO SIGN OF MILITARY ACTIVITY. MR 3 G-2 TOLD DAO/RLO AUG 17 THAT ROAD WAS OPEN AND QUIET. PHUOC TUY SECTOR TOLD RLO ROAD WAS OPEN, BUT IN FACT ITS USE SEEMS STILL TO BE LIMITED, AND WE DO NOT KNOW HOW HEAVILY ARMED AN ARVN UNIT MUST BE TO USE THE ROAD.

5. TAY NINH PROVINCE CHIEF COL. THIEN TOLD RRO THAT COMMUNISTS HOAVE NOW GOT BA DEN MOUNTAIN RINGED WITH SA 7 ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES, MAKING HELICOPTER RESUPPLY OF THE MOUNTAINTOP COMMUNICATIONS BASE VERY DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE. MEANWHILE, CONGEN LOCAL EMPLOYEES PICKED UP COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS IN DOWNTOWN TAY NINH MORNING AUG 20, FIRST TIME COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA HAD APPEARED THERE SINCE JANUARY CEASE-FIRE. LEAFLETS CRITICIZED HEAVY TAXES AND RISING PRICES, CALLED ON SOLDIERS TO BE UNITED WITH THE PEOPLE, AND OPPOSED A PLANNED CHANGE FROM AN OLD TO A NEW MARKET.

6. CONGEN EMPHASIZES THAT ITEM REPORTING VIEWS OF LONG AN PROVINCE BANKER (AUG 17 SITREP) IS NOT TO BE CONSTURED AS REFLECTIVE OF WIDESPREAD FEELING IN THIS OR ANY OTHER PROVINCE IN MR 3. BANKER'S PREDICTION THAT GVN WILL COLLAPSE IN 3 MONTHS IS CONTRARY TO FACTS AS CONGEN KNOWS THEM. CONGEN NOTES THAT PEOPLE IN MR 3 MAY BE UNHAPPY ABOUT PRICES AND INFLATION BUT ARE NOT ABOUT TO TURN TO COMMUNISTS FOR SOLUTION OF PROBLEM.

PART VI MR 4

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1. FOR THE 24-HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0600 AUGUST 18, MR IV REPORTS 30 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS, INCLUDING FIVE GROUND ATTACKS AND 20 ABF. CORPS REPORTS 22 GVN KIA, 98 WIA AND 19 MISSING AND CLAIMS 47 VC/NVA KIA, ONE CAPTURED, AND THREE SUSPECTS DETAINED. IN ADDITION, FIVE CIVILIANS WERE KILLED AND FOUR WOUNDED. DINH TUONG WAS THE FOCUS OF ACTION, WITH 7 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS, FOLLOWED BY KIEN GIANG WITH 6 INCIDENTS. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ACTION IN DINH TUONG RESULTED IN NINE GVN TROOPS WOUNDED AND 11 MISSING; AND THE LOSS OF A NUMBER OF WEAPONS. FOR THE 24 HOUR PERIOD ENDING 0600 AUGUST 20, THERE WERE 23 VC-INITIATED INCIDENTS, INCLUDING TWO GROUND ATTACKS AND 16 ABF. CORPS REPORTS 12 GVN KIA AND 83 WIA, AND CLAIMS 104 VC KILLED AND ONE CAPTURED. NO INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 0600 AUGUST 19.

2. AT A MEETING WITH DELTA PROVINCE CHIEFS ON AUG. 18, MR IV COMMANDER MAJOR GENERAL NGHI ESTABLISHED A RICE QUOTA SYSTEM, BY PROVINCE, TO MEET GVN RICE STOCK NEEDS. A SYSTEM OF PERMITS WILL BE USED TO CONTROL SHIPMENTS FROM THE DELTA PROVINCES TO SAIGON AND TO REDUCE BLACK MARKETEERING AND TRADING WITH THE VIET CONG AND CAMBODIA, AS WELL AS TO HOLD DOWN THE PRICE. BECAUSE THE PRICE OF RICE IN III AND IV CORPS IS SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN I & II CORPS (ROUGHLY VN\$13,000 PER 100 KILOS, AS OPPOSED TO ROUGHLY VN\$20,000), THE GVN RICE ALLOCATION IN THE NORTH WILL BE 45 KILOS PER SOLDIER, POLICEMAN, RF OR PF TROOPER, BUT LIMITED TO 21 KILOS IN MR III AND IV. IN MR IV, IF THE PRICE OF RICE IS VN\$13,000 PER 100 KILOS OR LESS, THE GVN WILL ALLOT VN\$3000 PER ELIGIBLE PERSON, BUT IF THE PRICE RISES ABOVE VN\$13,000, THE GVN WILL ISSUE 21 KILOS PER PERSON DIRECTLY FROM ITS OWN STOCKS.

3. IN EDNH TUONG, THE PRINCIPAL SCENE OF VIET CONG ACTIVITY DURING LAST WEEK, OUR VICE CONSUL REPORTS THAT TWO OUTPOSTS IN NORTHWEST CAI LAY DISTRICT, WERE SIMULTANEOUSLY OVERRUN ON AUGUST 16. THE TWO ATTACKS RESULTED IN 12 GVN TROOPS WOUNDED, 23 MISSING AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES. NO VC/ NVA LOSSES WERE REPORTED. ON AUGUST 16 OR 17, THE 403 RF BN CONTACTED AN ESTIMATED VC BN WHILE RESUPPLYING AN OUTPOST. THE RESULT WAS SEVEN GVN KIA, 25 WIA, AND EIGHT MISSING AND A CLAIMED 11 VC KIA.

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4. PROVREP VINH BINH REPORTS A MAJOR GVN VICTORY ON AUG 19 IN TIEU CAN DIISTRICT, RESULTING IN 65 VC KILLED, WITH JUST SIX GVN KIA AND 12 WIA. THE OPERATION FOLLOWED GVN INTELLIGENCE

THAT THE VC WERE PLANNING TO ATTACK TAP NGAI VILLAGE.

5. A NEW RD CADRE PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN IN VINH LONG IS APPARENTLY DESIGNED TO REMIND THE PEOPLE THAT THEY CAN CARRY THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE VC INTO THE POLITICAL DOMAIN, WITH THE SLOGANS: "EACH PERSON HAS ONE VOTE TO BRING PEACE," AND "IF THE NATION WINS-WE ALL SURVIVE; IF THE COMMUNISTS WIN-WE LOSE EVERYTHING."
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